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Concerning the history, formulation and interpretation of the conversion's issue in english language

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines history of formation, formulation and the process of conversion in English in the context of Functional Discourse Grammar. Although conversion has traditionally been considered to be morphological in nature (zero-derivation), different authors have suggested a syntactic approach, in which lexemes are deprived of categorial information in the lexicon and are put to use in different syntactic contexts and this article comprises proper scientific analysis and methodological description of various linguists' approaches concerning this quite a controversary and complicated linguistic issue of conversion.

Keywords: conversion, non-affix word production, paradigm of a word, variation of the function of the same word, polyfunctionalism, "ordinary and "occasional" functions of words, derivational essence.

1. INTRODUCTION

The word-formation system of each language undergoes various changes during the period of historical development: new word-formation tools appear, resources already available in the language can change their activity, word-formation elements acquire new meanings, etc. Therefore, at each stage of development, the language has a certain number of word-formation methods through which new words are formed. Modern English is characterized by a number of active word-formation processes, among which derivation is not the last place, carried out without adding the word-forming affix to the basis of the motivating word. One of the most productive methods of such word-formation is conversion - the formation of a word in one part of speech from another without changing the external form. This word-formation process is also known as the root or non-suffix way of formation, function change, derivation with the help of the zero morpheme, the use of the word in the function of various parts of speech.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Although, according to some linguists, the term "conversion" does not fully reflect the essence of this phenomenon, it is most it is widely used and therefore, in our opinion, seems to be more successful than other options. For the first time the term "conversion" was used by G. Sweet in 1892, although the phenomenon itself was noticed by Matzner mean earlier [10, p. 87] G. Sweet, an outstanding English linguist, devotes a whole section to the description of conversion in his study, he beeps that in English, like in many others, you can turn a word from one part of a speech into another without any visible change in its external form [5, p. 41]. The term "root or non-suffix way of forming words" does not fully reflect the essence of the phenomenon due to the fact that not only root, but also derivatives can be used as a production basis, complex basics and even phrases. For example: night club - night club, to nightclub - visit a night club. The term "non-affix word production" is considered too general. In accordance with its name, this is a word-formation method in which the formation of a new word occurs without the help of word-building affixes in general. However, word-formation processes such as word-combination or alternation of stress or sound also do not require the participation of any affixes. Thus, this term also does not explain the essence of conversion, does not explain the specifics of this method of forming new words in comparison with others that do not require the help of word-building affixes [7, p. 20].

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3. ANALYSIS

In the specialized literature on the study of conversion, there are 3 main points of view on the essence of this phenomenon:

- 1. Conversion is considered as the use of the same word in the functions of different parts of speech.
- 2. On the one hand, conversion is interpreted as the use of the same word in the functions of different parts of speech, and on the other hand, it is compared with word formation.
- 3. Conversion is recognized as a word-formation method. Supporters of the first point of view are Brown, Nesfield, Bladin, Kennedy, Long, Craig, Jagger, Waddell and others. Scientists recognized the possibility of using the same word in the functions of different parts of speech, while completely denied the word-forming role of conversion. A. Kennedy considers conversion as a transition of one part of speech to another, but at the same time considers it possible to include in the concept of "conversion" the transition of one noun to another, one verb to another, i.e. talks about conversion within the same part of speech, as well as the presence of hybrid words that simultaneously belong to two different parts of speech [4, p. 35] J. Jegger writes that in a language with poor inflection the word function varies depending on its position in the sentence, and considers that, for example, the word "war" can be both a verb, a noun and an adjective.

Thus, the conversion of J. Jagger is considered as a variation of the function of the same word. G. Brown, in his grammar, writes that parts of speech are usually determined by their use in sentences, and in English the same word can be used in functions of different parts of speech [3,p. 122]. The views of D. Craig, M. Long, J. Nesfield are similar to those described above. However, supporters of a functional concept or the theory of polyfunctionalism, as it is also called, inevitably encounter the fact that the word, even out of context, has something specific. That is why they are forced to talk about the "ordinary" or "main" function of the word and the so-called "actual" or "Occasional" of his function. So, for example, the main function of the word round is considered to be the function of the adjective, and the rest - the noun, verb, adverb and preposition - are considered as its occasional functions. Considering conversion to be a purely syntactic phenomenon, researchers ignore the fact that English words are strictly distributed in parts of speech. The consequence of absolute neglect of morphology and semantics is the confusion of such different phenomena as the formation of new words with their own system of forms, functions and meanings and the functioning of the same word. This concept has been repeatedly criticized by both foreign and domestic linguists. It is unacceptable, since it considers conversion as a way of using words, and not as a way of word formation. Conversion in English is not "the use of the same word as a function of different parts of speech, since units that are related by conversion are separate different words with respect to each other" [8, p. 27].

4. DISCUSSION

The second group of linguists who consider conversion as the use of a word in one part of speech in the functions of other parts of speech, as well as comparing conversion with word formation, includes G. Sweet, O. Jespersen, G. Bradley, E. Craising and St. Robertson. G. Sweet says that in English, like in many others, there is the possibility of turning a word from one part of a speech into another without changing its external form, but only by changing the paradigm of the word. He also points to some similarities between conversion and word formation, although, in his opinion, the transformation of a verb into a noun can hardly be considered as the formation of a new word [9, p. 39]. Doubting the derivational nature of the conversion, G. Sweet comes to the negation of the change in the meaning of the word during conversion and believes that the change in the meaning of the word occurs as a result of using the word in the functions of various parts of speech (Ibid.) A convertible word is a word that accepts all the formal characteristics of that part of speech into which this word is converted. If supporters of the theory of polyfunctionalism considered syntactic as the only criterion for determining whether a word belongs to one or another part of speech, then G. Sweet considered this criterion to be morphological. Taking into account only this criterion, G. Sweet comes to the erroneous conclusion that conversion is the transformation of a word related to one part of speech into another using the corresponding paradigm. The scientist claims that during the conversion there is no change in the meaning of the converted words, G. Sweet attributes the existing cases of changing the meaning of the converted words due to the prolonged use of the word in the functions of various parts of speech (Ibid.).

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Consequently, he denies the formation of a new word in terms of conversion and believes that differences in the meanings of converted words result from the long use of the same word in the functions of different parts of speech. Thus, G. Sweet comes to the negation of the derivational essence of conversion. The point of view of G. Bradley on the essence of conversion is very similar to the point of view of G. Sweet. He also considers the paradigm of the word to be the only word-formation tool for conversion. But Bradley concludes that the conversion does not form a new word, and the noun is used in the function of the verb [1, p. 131]. However, G. Bradley points out that in modern English there are a huge number of nouns formed by conversion, which are verbs in the function of nouns: wash, think, and share [2, p. 132].

5. CONCLUSION

The point of view of linguists such as E. Craising and Art. Robertson comes down to considering conversion in English as a shift in parts of speech. E. Craising believes that such a shift in the parts of speech occurs due to the absence in modern English of almost all formal differences between parts of speech. It is this fact, according to the scientist, that makes it possible to freely use the word in various functions. Similar to E. Craising, Art. Robertson considers conversion as a shift in parts of speech, but in contrast, he believes that conversion is one of the most significant processes in the development of the dictionary, i.e. in the formation of new words [6, p. 386].

The above linguists did not establish and did not fully recognize the word-formation essence of conversion, which resulted in a dual understanding of this phenomenon: on the one hand, as the use of the same word in the functions of different parts of speech, and on the other hand, as a word-formation method, with which the only word-forming tool is the paradigm of the word.

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